

WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



ORGANISATION MONDIALE
DE LA SANTÉ

CENTRE INTERNATIONAL DE RECHERCHE SUR LE CANCER
INTERNATIONAL AGENCY FOR RESEARCH ON CANCER

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In reply please refer to: C2/12/11
Prière de rappeler la référence:

OSHA CCU #
17784

28 May 1981

Dear Mr Auchter,

I am forwarding to you my reply to a letter dated 12 May 1981, reference PFI/tn, from Dr Peter Infante, a member of your staff.

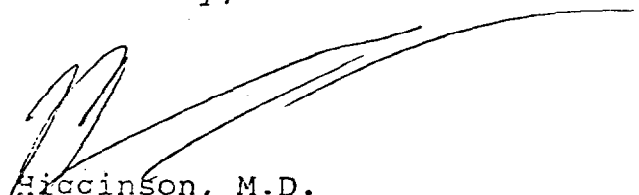
Dr Infante's letter not only casts aspersions on the competence and objectivity of the Working Group of the IARC who evaluated formaldehyde, but further, by its tone appears to be an attempt by a United States Regulatory Agency to influence the decisions of the Working Group.

The IARC is an organization operating under the auspices of eleven countries (including the United States) and is an autonomous part of the World Health Organization. The competence, objectivity and scientific reputation of the advisors who comprise the Working Groups of the Agency are universally acknowledged by governments, universities, industry and trade unions.

While we do appreciate constructive comments and criticisms, it is important that those which reflect on the Agency's scientific advisors should be accurately documented before being circulated among the scientific community; this is especially true where the criticism comes from a governmental body within a participating state.

As it is my duty to protect the reputation of the Agency's scientific advisors, I feel that you should be aware of my views on Dr Infante's unusual action.

Yours sincerely,



John Higginson, M.D.
Director

Mr Thorne G. Auchter
Assistant Secretary
Occupational Safety and Health